



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Aids to Bible Readers.

THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

By the REV. PROFESSOR MILTON S. TERRY, D.D.,
Garrett Biblical Institute.

Questions of authorship and date.—Remarkable character of the book.—The interpretation prejudiced by extravagant notions of biblical prophecy.—Theme, the coming of Christ's Kingdom.—Nature of the Kingdom spiritual but revolutionary.—The Revelation a symbolical picture of the fall of Judaism and the assured triumph of Christianity in the world.—Analysis.

THE different opinions respecting the authorship of the New Testament books commonly attributed to John may be briefly stated as follows :

1. John the son of Zebedee, the disciple and apostle of Jesus, was the author of the Revelation, the fourth gospel and the three epistles.
2. John, the Apostle, was the author of the Revelation, but not of the gospel and the epistles.
3. John the Apostle was the author of the gospel and the epistles, but not of the Revelation. Those who adopt this last view attribute the Revelation either (1) to a presbyter John, mentioned in ancient writings, or (2) to John Mark, the companion of Paul and Barnabas, or (3) to some otherwise unknown John, whose only remaining monument is this book.

The external evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of the first opinion named. The objections to the apostolic authorship are based mainly on internal evidence. It is argued that the author of the Revelation does not call himself an apostle, but a servant, a brother and partaker in tribulation, which is a negative way of implying that he was not an apostle. He does not assume apostolical authority, nor the paternal relation traceable in 1 John 2:1, 5:21, 2 John 1, and 3 John 1. But the most weighty argument is derived from the language

¹ Under this head will be published from month to month articles intended to furnish help in the intelligent *reading* of the books of the Bible *as books*. They will aim to present not so much fresh results of critical investigation as well-established and generally recognized conclusions.

and style, which are acknowledged to be remarkably different from the gospel and the epistles. There are numerous Hebraisms and peculiar solecisms. The addresses to the seven churches are stern and lordly, quite unlike the manner of John's epistles. Instead of the calm and profound utterances of the other Johannine writings, we find visions, symbols, and vivid pictures of things in heaven and on earth. Instead of the spiritual worship taught in the fourth gospel, we have gorgeous ideals of cherubim, elders, angels, glorified spirits and all things in heaven and earth and under the earth and in the sea, giving glory to him who sits upon the throne. The description of the Word of God, the Antichrist, the judgment and the resurrection are in notable contrast with these doctrines as they appear in the gospel and the epistles. It may be safely said that aside from the external testimony no modern critic would suspect that the Revelation was written by the author of the other so called Johannine books.

All these arguments against the Johannine authorship of the Apocalypse are offset by other considerations which take from their apparent value. The subject-matter and scope of the Revelation account for most of the differences mentioned above. It is a book of prophecy. The addresses to the churches are not so much epistles as prophetic messages. The visions are not intended to inculcate doctrines but to disclose things which were shortly to come to pass. The difference of language may further be accounted for by supposing that the gospel and epistles were written long after the Revelation. On the whole, we see no sufficient reason for rejecting the best testimony of the early church. But the question is of no serious importance in itself, or for the interpretation of the book. God may have sent this "testimony of Jesus Christ" by some other John than the beloved disciple.

Two different opinions have long prevailed respecting the *date* of the Apocalypse. One rests mainly on the testimony of Irenaeus, who is understood to refer the composition to the latter part of the reign of Domitian (*i. e.*, about A. D. 96.) The other depends on internal evidence, which points to a time prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and during the reign of Nero. The trend of modern criticism is unmistakably in favor of the earlier date. The witness of the book itself is entitled to more consideration than the ambiguous statement of Irenaeus.

The Revelation is in many respects the most remarkable book of the New Testament. It is the consummation and crown of all the apocalyptic books of prophecy. The author makes a most discrimi-

nating use of figures, names and symbols, and it is worthy of note that there is hardly a vision or symbol that is not to some extent appropriated from the Old Testament. This fact, however, does not militate against the originality of the writer. "It is not every collection of straws that makes a bird's nest." It is no detriment to the value of the Lord's prayer that its several petitions had in many ways been poured out in pious supplication before the Lord himself set them in their present inimitable form.

The exposition of this book has been prejudiced in many ways. Unsound and extravagant notions of the nature of prophecy have been the principal cause of the multifarious exegesis. Many come to the study of this Apocalypse assuming in advance that one may reasonably expect to find in it detailed predictions of the politics of modern Europe, or of all the great events of human history to the end of time. In spite of the author's repeated declaration that his prophecy is of things shortly to come to pass, many an expositor has insisted that even these words must be harmonized with the idea of centuries of delay.

There is a much more simple and natural interpretation. The one great theme running through the entire book, so conspicuous that the wildest exegesis has not failed to see it, is the coming and kingdom of Christ, with special reference to the preliminary overthrow of some hostile persecuting power that stood in the way. The main question of exegesis is, What was that great city or obstacle which must needs be overthrown before the city and kingdom of God could be manifested?

In answering this question the best expositors divide in their views of the nature and time of the kingdom of Christ. There are those who teach that the kingdom of God and his Christ, as presented in the New Testament, has never been established in this world. It is an event of the future, and will be ushered in with great spectacular display in the clouds of heaven. The other view of the kingdom is that it is a spiritual dispensation, a new era of religious life and knowledge; that Christ introduced this new dispensation and secured its firm establishment through the preaching of apostles in the last days of the Jewish state; and that the kingdom of God in Christ is now the mightiest religious force in the world. The reign of the Lord Jesus Christ is primarily a conquest of the hearts of men, and therefore the beginning and progress of his kingdom is likened to the mustard seed and the leaven. As the number of his subjects increases, and his truth becomes

a conspicuous factor in human civilization, the kingdoms of the world become also a part of his heavenly dominion. So his kingdom is not of the world, but is destined to overcome the world.

Our explanation of the Revelation accepts the latter view of the kingdom of Christ. There is no teaching of our Lord more clearly recorded in the synoptic gospels than that the Son of Man was to come in his kingdom before some of those who heard him speak should taste of death (Matt. 16 : 28, Mark 9 : 1, Luke 9 : 27). And unless the language of Matthew 24, and its parallels in Mark and Luke are altogether misleading, Jesus most positively declared that his coming on the clouds of heaven would accompany or immediately follow the destruction of the Jewish state. The ruin of Jerusalem and the temple was to mark the end of the pre-Messianic age, and the full inauguration of a new dispensation of the kingdom of God.

We accordingly understand the Revelation to be a visional picture of the fall of Judaism with its national city and temple, and the consequent assured establishment of Christianity. The old covenant had "become aged, and was nigh unto vanishing away" (Heb. 8 : 13), but its removal involved a shaking not only of the earth, but also of the heaven (Heb. 12 : 26). The mighty change from the old to the new is depicted, in perfect harmony with the style of the Old Testament apocalypses, as a world-convulsing revolution. Sun, moon and stars and the heaven itself collapse, and the crisis of ages is signaled by voices and thunders and earthquake. But to insist that such symbolical pictures are a literal description of the destruction of the physical world is to shut one's eyes to the obviously metaphorical significance of the same language in the Old Testament.

Any adequate exposition of the Revelation requires a volume larger than the book itself. In the remaining space allotted to this article we can only outline the general plan and contents of the prophecy.

The book is divisible into two nearly equal parts, the second beginning with chapter 12. These two parts are together a duplicate picture of the one great theme. Similar examples of a double apocalyptic representation are seen in the dreams of Joseph and of Pharaoh, and in the prophecies of Daniel and of Zechariah. Accordingly, the overthrow of "Babylon the Great" in the second part is but a symbolical counterpart of "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt" in the first part. The catastrophe of the first part ends with the vision of the opened temple of God in the heaven, and the sound of great voices in heaven shouting, "The kingdom of the world

is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign unto the ages of the ages" (11:15). The catastrophe of the second part is followed by the vision of the New Jerusalem, the river and tree of life, the throne of God and of the Lamb, the glory of his servants, and the declaration that "they shall reign unto the ages of the ages" (22:5). The following analysis of these two sections, presented by the author before the American Society of Biblical Exegesis, and printed in its Journal, is herewith submitted to the readers of THE BIBLICAL WORLD.

ANALYSIS.

FIRST PART.

The Revelation of the Lamb, I.-XI.

<i>a.</i> Title and superscription	1:1-3
<i>b.</i> Salutation.	1:4-6
<i>c.</i> Apocalyptic announcement	1:7-8
I. THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES	1:9-3:22
<i>a.</i> Introductory Christophany	1:9-20
<i>b.</i> The seven epistles:	
1. To the Church in Ephesus	2:1-7
2. To the Church in Smyrna	2:8-11
3. To the Church in Pergamum	2:12-17
4. To the Church in Thyatira	2:18-29
5. To the Church in Sardis	3:1-6
6. To the Church in Philadelphia	3:7-13
7. To the Church in Laodicea	3:14-22
II. THE OPENING OF THE SEVEN SEALS	4-7
<i>a.</i> The heavenly theophany	4:1-11
<i>b.</i> The book with seven seals	5:1-5
<i>c.</i> The lamb at the throne	5:6-10
<i>d.</i> The worship of God and the Lamb	5:11-14
<i>e.</i> The opening of the seals:	
1. First seal opened (white horse)	6:1, 2
2. Second seal opened (red horse)	6:3, 4
3. Third seal opened (black horse)	6:5, 6
4. Fourth seal opened (pale horse)	6:7, 8
5. Fifth seal opened (souls under altar)	6:9-11
6. Sixth seal opened (shaking of earth and heavens)	6:12-17
[First interlude	7
(1) The sealing of elect Israel	7:1-8
(2) The innumerable multitude washed in the blood of the Lamb	7:9-17]
7. Seventh seal opened	8:1

III. THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVEN TRUMPETS	8—11
<i>a.</i> The seven angels	8:2
<i>b.</i> The angel with the censer	8:3-6
<i>c.</i> The trumpets sounded :	
1. First trumpet sounded (earth smitten)	8:7
2. Second trumpet sounded (sea smitten)	8:8, 9
3. Third trumpet sounded (rivers and fountains)	8:10, 11
4. Fourth trumpet sounded (sun smitten)	8:12
[Eagle of woe]	8:13]
5. Fifth trumpet sounded (locust-plague)	9:1-11
[Second announcement of woe]	9:12]
6. Sixth trumpet sounded (Euphrates-armies)	9, 13-21
[Second interlude]	10:1—11:13
(1) Mighty angel from heaven	10:1-7
(2) Eating of the little book	10:8-11

(The sealed book of 5:1-5 is now the opened book of 10:8-11. The Lamb took it out of the hand of him who sat on the throne (5:7); having opened its seven seals he gives it to John as a word of prophecy, and John takes it out of the angel's hand. The book is no other than "the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him" (*i.e.* Jesus), and which he in turn "sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John," as stated in chap. 1:1.)

(3) Measuring of the temple	11:1, 2
(4) The two witnesses	11:3-13]
[Announcement of third woe]	11:14]
7. Seventh trumpet sounded (the end)	11:15-19
(1) The kingdom becomes Christ's	11:15
(2) The song of triumph	11:16-18
(3) God's temple in heaven opened	11:19

SECOND PART.

The Revelation of the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb, XII.-XXII.

I. THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON	12
1. The woman in travail	12:1, 2
2. The great red dragon	12:3-4
3. The child caught up to God and the woman nourished in the wilderness	12:5-6
4. War in heaven	12:7, 8
5. The dragon and his angels cast out	12:9
6. Consequent joy in heaven	12:10-12
7. Persecution of the woman and the rest of her seed	12:13-17
II. THE TWO BEASTS	13
1. The beast out of the sea	13:1-10
2. The beast out of the land	13:11-18

III. A SEVENFOLD REVELATION OF TRIUMPH AND JUDGMENT	14
1. The Lamb and his thousands on Mt. Zion	14 : 1-5
2. The eternal gospel	14 : 6, 7
3. Fallen Babylon	14 : 8
4. The solemn admonition	14 : 9-12
5. The blessed dead	14 : 13
6. The harvest of the earth	14 : 14-16
7. The vintage of judgment.	14 : 17-20
IV. THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES	15 : 16
<i>a.</i> The seven angels	15 : 1
<i>b.</i> Song by the glassy sea	15 : 2-4
<i>c.</i> The procession of the angels	15 : 5-8
<i>d.</i> Pouring out of the bowls of wrath	16 : 1
1. First plague (grievous sore)	16 : 2
2. Second plague (sea turned to blood)	16 : 3
3. Third plague (rivers and fountains turned to blood)	16 : 4-7
4. Fourth plague (sun smitten)	16 : 8, 9
5. Fifth plague (throne of beast smitten)	16 : 10, 11
6. Sixth plague (Euphrates-armies)	16 : 12-16
7. Seventh plague (Babylon doomed)	16 : 17-21
V. BABYLON, THE GREAT HARLOT	17--19 : 10
1. Vision of the harlot	17 : 1-6
2. The mystery explained	17 : 7-18
3. Angelic proclamation	18 : 1-3
4. Another heavenly voice	18 : 4-8
5. Dirges and rejoicing over her fall	18 : 9-20
6. Symbolic act and word of doom	18 : 21-24
7. The heavenly halleluiahs	19 : 1-8
[Angel's words to John]	19 : 9, 10]
VI. MILLENNIAL CONFLICT AND TRIUMPH	19 : 11--21 : 8
1. The heavenly conqueror	19 : 11-16
2. The great supper of sacrifice	19 : 17, 18
3. Beast and false prophet destroyed	19 : 19-21
4. Satan chained and in prison	20 : 1-3
5. Millennial period consummated in the final overthrow of Satan	20 : 4-10
6. The final judgment	20 : 11-15
7. New Heaven, new Earth, and new Jerusalem	21 : 1-8

[Here are seven closely related pictures of the assured triumph of the holy heaven over all the hostile powers of earth and hell, and each of the seven begins with "and I saw." This sevenfold vision of victory corresponds in the apocalyptic scheme with the seven last plagues which issued in the fall of

Babylon the harlot. The last of those seven was accompanied by a voice from the throne which said "it is done" (16:17), and Babylon the great was judged. The last of these seven is accompanied by another voice from the throne, which says "they are done" (21:6), and all things are made new (*cf.* 11:15). The entire Messianic era is here viewed as one group of pictures, and the seer beholds it as a unit, and makes no attempt, as literalists imagine, to write a history of Christianity beforehand. His prophecy is of things destined to come to pass shortly, and the vision of "the thousand years" is in no way inconsistent with this claim. The new age simply and quickly follows the conclusion of the old, and in a few vivid pictures set in symbolic figures which the Old Testament prophets had already employed, the writer portrays all that was given him to know of the great future of the kingdom of God.

It should also be noted that as the seventh plague was followed by a detailed vision of Babylon the harlot, so the seventh vision of millennial triumph is followed by elaborate portraiture of "the Jerusalem which is above and is our mother" (Gal. 4:26). And each of these elaborated visions is a special and supplementary revelation of one of the seven angels of the seven bowls (*cf.* 17:1 and 21:9).]

VII. JERUSALEM, THE GLORIOUS BRIDE	21:9—22:5
1. Vision of New Jerusalem	21:9-14
2. Measure of city and walls	21:15-17
3. Materials of its structure	21:18-21
4. Its temple and its light	21:22, 23
5. Character of its inhabitants	21:24-27
6. River and trees of life	22:1, 2
7. Eternal reign in glory	22:3-5
CONCLUSION	22:6-21